



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIES**  
*Insurance Services - Health Services Analysis*  
*PO Box 44322, Olympia, WA 98504-4322*

**IME Improvement Project Update**  
**March 5, 2004**

➤ **Draft IME Fees**

L&I received extensive feedback in response to recently shared draft IME fees. The department has decided to delay implementation of the new fees until **July 1, 2004**. New fees and billing codes will be sent to providers by **April 29**, to allow sufficient time to adjust billing systems. The feedback received will help L&I revise the proposed fee structure and draft better billing instructions.

➤ **Revised IME Washington Administrative Code (WAC) for IMEs and Impairment Ratings**

In late 2003, L&I shared proposed WACs and accepted comments and testimony. The new rules became effective March 1, 2004. Here are links to PDF files of those revised rules. When you reach the web page, click on "Current Rule Language".

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/LawRule/WhatsNew/Proposed/default.asp?RuleUpdateID=255&RuleID=268>

If you do not have access to the Internet and want a copy of the rules mailed to you, please call 360-902-5128.

Link to complete rules for Impairment Rating, 296-20-200 through 690:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.cfm?fuseaction=chapterdigest&chapter=296-20>

Link to complete rules for IMEs, 296-23-302 through 392 (look under "Nursing" subtitle):

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wac/index.cfm?fuseaction=chapterdigest&chapter=296-23>

➤ **IME Provider Number Applications**

Reminder: All currently approved IME examiners and IME firms need to reapply to obtain IME provider numbers. Please be sure to send in your applications for the new IME provider numbers if you have not already done so. Applications must be received by **March 12**, so L&I can place your name in the new IME examiner database that schedulers will use beginning **April 5**.

Carole Winegar is your contact regarding provider number applications. She can be reached at: [winc235@lni.wa.gov](mailto:winc235@lni.wa.gov) or 360-902-6815. Applications can be FAXED to 360-902-4249.

Link to the PDF application and W-9 form:

<http://www.lni.wa.gov/Forms/pdf/245046af.pdf>

➤ **Use of Old Versus New IME Provider Numbers**

Examiners performing exams on their own (NOT through IME firms) may begin to bill IME services with their new provider numbers as soon as they are received.

IME firms: Please continue to use your current provider numbers and bill as you currently do until further notice. Do NOT use new examiner provider numbers on your bills at this time. Questions? Please contact David Overby at [over235@lni.wa.gov](mailto:over235@lni.wa.gov) or 360-902-6791.

➤ **IME Referral Questions**

In November 2003, L&I claim managers began using revised referral questions. We have received questions and concerns about these questions and will be reviewing the issues this month. Comments and questions about the referral questions can be sent to Anita Austin, at [sund235@lni.wa.gov](mailto:sund235@lni.wa.gov).

Please DO NOT include patient-identifying information in your e-mails. If you have case-specific examples, please FAX them to Anita, at 360-902-4249.

➤ **IME Provider Information Forums-Mark Your Calendar**

L&I will provide two information forums to explain many of the recent IME changes and answer questions. The first will be **May 8**, at the L&I Tukwila Service Location. We will also have one videoconference on **May 13**. Additional information about these information forums will be sent later this month.

➤ **Request for Proposal (RFP) for the IME Quality Assurance (QA) Pilot Project**

In 2003, the legislature appropriated \$398,000 to test an IME QA program. The department will be issuing a contract through a competitive bidding process. The RFP will be issued in March 2004. If you would like to receive a copy of the RFP, please send an e-mail to David Overby at [over235@lni.wa.gov](mailto:over235@lni.wa.gov). If you would like to be added to the potential bidder's list, please provide your name, title, name of firm, e-mail, US mail address and phone number in your note.

➤ **L&I IME Web Page link:** <http://www.lni.wa.gov/ClaimsInsurance/Providers/IME/default.asp>

➤ **News from the New Centralized Scheduling Unit (CSU) in Seattle**

The last scheduler for the CSU has been hired. Ralitsa Sergieva will come on board on March 22, 2004. She is multi-lingual in Russian, Bulgarian, German and English. With the addition of Ralitsa, the CSU will have a full unit of nine schedulers and a customer service specialist. The CSU supervisor is Phyllis Brehmeyer, who can be reached at 206-515-2799.

The CSU is hosting a "Get to Know Us" **Open House on March 29, 2004, from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** at the Seattle Service Location. Come and attach a face with the voice you talk to on the phone. If you have not been to the "almost" new Seattle location, this would be a good time to visit.

L&I Seattle Service Location address:

**315 5<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.  
Suite 200  
Seattle, WA 98104-2607**

Link to Seattle Service location contact information:

<http://www.LNI.wa.gov/Main/ContactInfo/OfficeLocations/seattle.asp>